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ABSTRACT

This is one of a series which focuses on the use of human resources in guidance programs. Intended for use by school personnel workers, on all levels, to help in the development of new programs through actively working with other significant persons. This monograph discusses support personnel through the exploration of: (1) models of practice; (2) some generalizations; (3) action possibilities; and (4) suggestions for implementation. An annotated list of references is included. (CJ)

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PERSONNEL SERVICES REVIEW

SERIES 3

Human Resources in the Guidance Program

SUPPORT PERSONNEL IN GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

CG 400 026

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Series 3
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Nancy E. Sloan

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ERIC Counseling and Personnel Services Information Center
The University of Michigan
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FORWARD

The Personnel Services Review is an ongoing publication Series which has been developed by CAPS to inform personnel workers about new developments in a number of personnel services areas. There will be several different series of the Personnel Services Review. Each series will focus on a broad area of personnel work practice. Within each series there will be a number of specific issues (varying from five to ten depending on the series). Each of these issues will concentrate on a specific practice, procedure or method. The goal of these publications is to enable the reader to: (1) become aware of a practice, procedure or method; (2) learn about the ways in which this practice has been applied by others; (3) understand the underlying theory behind the practice; (4) consider possible applications of the practice in a variety of settings; and (5) consider ways that the practice might be implemented in his own personnel work program.

This particular Personnel Service Review Series is entitled "Human Resources in the Guidance Program." The series will contain about five issues. Each issue will focus on people who are available to participate with the counselor in the school guidance program. Program models for involving families, students, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other community members in guidance and counseling activities will be considered. The series is intended to suggest ways that counselors and student personnel workers on the elementary, secondary, and/or college level may expand their activities and develop new programs through communicating, and actively working with other significant people.

SUPPORT PERSONNEL IN GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

DO YOU RECOGNIZE THESE CONCERNS?

Is there a gap between the need for services and the professional personnel available to provide such services?

Is there a need to link the school and community more closely and to establish more communication between the two institutions?

Would the use of more adults, selected on the basis of their concern for children, offer increased opportunity for innovative programs and increased time for more **counseling activities by professionals?**

Are members of the counseling staff spending too high a proportion of their time on duties which could be performed by staff with special skills, but less training?

WHO ARE SUPPORT PERSONNEL?

Support personnel include all non-professionals who assist in the guidance program. Such terms as subprofessional, paraprofessional, aide, and assistant may also be used with the same meaning, but often denote differences in educational level or tasks performed. Support personnel, as used in this review, covers the various levels of assistants, not including secretarial staff.

MODELS OF PRACTICE

Counselor Assistant Project (Rochester, N.Y.)
As one part of a larger project assessing guidance program status and needs, the Counselor Assistant Project took place in three school districts in 1966-67. The goal of the project was to train personnel in an auxiliary role and to develop activities appropriate for a counselor assistant in a secondary school. Three trainees were hired on the basis of criteria established with the approval of each cooperating school district. All three assistants had previously worked as secretaries, two within the guidance offices. Training consisted of on-the-job activities under the supervision of the assigned counselor, and conference time and instruction with the project director's staff. The instructional time included one-half day per week in conference, two in-service meetings per month, and a professional seminar once a month at the University of Rochester. These meetings were to provide professional information and a broad understanding of the field of guidance as well as interpersonal contacts with counselors and consultants. The assistant's daily activities included working with groups on orientation, vocational planning, and post high school planning; participating in various aspects of the school testing program; operating audio visual equipment and conducting screening interviews (Salim and Vogan, 1968).

Guidance Assistant Project (Deerfield, Ill.)
Twelve guidance assistants were hired to work in the elementary schools after careful screening of applicants by a multi-discipline committee which included the school psychologist, the project director, the mental health clinic administrator, the guidance director,

and the school principal. Applicants were required to have a B.A. degree and to possess traits which were deemed important for working in such a capacity. The assistants were given an orientation prior to the opening of school which covered background, procedure, and expectations. Training during the school year was primarily the responsibility of the school psychologist and school social worker. This additional training included in-service instruction and a graduate course which emphasized specific activities such as case studies to be carried out on the job. The daily activities of the assistants included participation in the testing program; observation and data gathering; serving as resource persons; and working directly with children. The work with the children was in small groups and included classroom group guidance, screening for kindergarten and first grade, and making referrals. Evaluation of the first year of the project indicated success in many areas (Results of Pilot Activities, 1968).

Volunteer Activities (Winnetka, Ill.)

A program of volunteer work in the schools by senior citizens has been in existence in Winnetka for a number of years. In the past three years, the program has received funding and has been initiated in six other communities which differ in socioeconomic level. The volunteers are recruited through publicity and contacts with community organizations. After interviews to determine their experience, interests and availability, the volunteers are considered part of a "talent pool" from which the appointed school coordinators can draw. The volunteers have served in the schools as curriculum resource consultants, special lecturers, teacher aides, tutors for individuals and small groups, and in programs to meet the needs of special children such as underachievers, gifted, handicapped, or bilingual. The coordinator of the program assumes responsibility for placements, supervision, and evaluation of the volunteers as well as maintaining communication between school personnel and the volunteers to make the program effective. An extensive manual for such a coordinator is available from Winnetka schools (Freund, 1968).

Baker's Dozen Community Mental Health Center for Adolescents (Howard University, Washington, D.C.)

As part of a larger program of training the nonprofessional for new careers in the human services, this program trained youth as mental health aides for work with neighborhood children. Eight youths, ranging in age from 17 to 21, were selected and given three months of training. The training goals included development of personal motivation, values, and identity; basic social and interpersonal skills; and knowledge about working with groups and individuals. Under professional supervision, the aides acted as group leaders for ten children in each of two groups. The groups provided a series of activities designed for ego-strengthening and therapeutic benefits. The aides also participated in program planning, behavior observation, interviews with group members, and individual and group supervision (Mitchell in Grosser, Henry, and Kelly, 1969).

Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (Arkansas)

In an on-going study, the Rehabilitation Center has used counselor-aides under three experimental conditions. The aides were recruited as secretaries and given no additional training beyond on-the-job activities. The experimental design evaluated (1) counselors working alone in the traditional manner; (2) counselor aides assisting a counselor under maximal supervision; and (3) counselor aides functioning in the complete role of counselor with daily supervision. The clients were randomly assigned to the three counselor situations for regular individual and weekly group counseling sessions. All supervision was conducted in a one-to-one relationship between counselor and aide. The criteria established to measure progress of the clients indicated that the aide working on his own case load with daily supervision by the professional counselor was most successful. Tentative findings in this study suggest interpersonal warmth and high motivation on the part of the aide working with his own clients resulted in greater client benefit. This suggests consideration of a role for support personnel different from that proposed by professional organizations, i.e., an aide has his own case load rather than the aide assisting the professional counselor with one case load (Truax, 1968).

GENERALIZATIONS

1. There are numerous activities within the guidance program which can be effectively undertaken by support personnel.

2. Up to this time, the primary use in the schools of support personnel has been as teacher aides. There is now a growing interest in other possibilities for such people.

3. The addition of aides or paraprofessionals may be the catalyst for role and function evaluation by all school personnel.

4. In-service training and orientation is

needed for all school personnel when support people are introduced to the staff structure.

5. The introduction of support personnel can cause defensiveness and resistance among some members of the school staff. This may be an indication of the professional's job insecurity, and his view of support personnel lowering the standards of the profession.

6. The introduction of support personnel may set the climate for change within the institution or department.

7. The creation of roles for guidance aides and assistants may be viewed as strengthening the department and also as creating entry-level jobs for members of the community.

8. Community members may be enlisted as effective school helpers through a volunteer organization, as well as in paid positions.

9. Certain support personnel, if indigent to the surrounding community, may be more effective with the hard-to-reach families and students than the professional counselor. They are apt to be more in tune with the clients' life style and to meet fewer defensive barriers.

10. The many aspects of support personnel programs need to be carefully considered, especially such areas as job advancement, relationship to other staff members, place in professional organizations, and training and supervision.

11. A basic commitment to the worth of such a program is needed so problems can be met effectively.

ACTION POSSIBILITIES

Since the use of support personnel in pupil services is a relatively new concept, specific roles and functions are not clearly defined. There is, however, increasing professional interest in clarifying the various ways in which such personnel can be utilized to strengthen existing services. One such effort is the work of the ACES Committee on Support Personnel for Guidance in the Schools. This Committee has recently released a report which is now available through ERIC. The report offers a detailed discussion of issues to consider in using support personnel. This discussion is based upon a survey of existing programs and the attitudes of support personnel, guidance supervisors in state departments of education, and school counselors.

In one appendix of the report, activities are suggested for support personnel based on three levels of responsibility as outlined in the ASCA role statement. Tasks appropriate to support personnel are enumerated under eleven common activity areas in a guidance department. The following are examples taken from the report (Zimpfer, et al., 1970, Appendix B).

1. Planning and development of the guidance program:
   - Level I. Check supplies of standard forms and fill out routine orders for supplies.
   - Level II. Be familiar with equipment used in electronic data processing.
   - Level III. Supervise and coordinate the activities of clerical or other skilled personnel under the general supervision of the counselor.
2. Counseling:
   - Level I. Type reports of case conferences.
   - Level II. Act as a recorder in small group discussion or counseling sessions.
   - Level III. Observe verbal and non-verbal interaction in groups or act as a discussion leader in small groups with approval of the counselor.
3. Pupil appraisal:
   - Level I. Type reports of case conferences.
   - Level II. Identify students whose school achievement and test records show discrepancies.
   - Level III. Secure factual information from a client through use of a structured interview schedule.
4. Educational and occupational planning:
   - Level I. Maintain a file of occupational literature.
   - Level II. Secure follow-up information of a routine nature according to a general follow-up plan.
   - Level III. Assist students to obtain information on financial aid.

IMPLEMENTATION

Arnold Schmais (1967) presents a general overview of points to consider in any program which utilizes nonprofessionals or support personnel. Many of the following points have been taken from his discussion and are explored more fully by him.

1. The objectives and goals of the program using support personnel must be clearly stated and understood by all persons involved. A conception of support personnel which is acceptable to the total staff needs to be stated.

2. Resources which allow for a commitment to the particular program desired would include adequate funding, adequate staff time, and opportunities for training and advancement.

3. The role and duties of the aide or support person must be defined and described. This would include appraisal of existing tasks to be assumed and new services which he could help provide. Here, the ACES Committee description of three levels may be helpful. In it, program planners discuss whether more than one level of support personnel is desirable. The opportunities for occupational mobility and advancement in salary, status, or task opportunities should also be considered.

4. Recruitment of appropriate people is an important part of the process and should involve as many of the professional staff members as possible. Formal and informal community organizations are one means of finding participants. Also, community meetings to explain the program, neighborhood committees to make referrals and publicize the program, and public announcements are means of recruiting a wide group of applicants.

5. Screening and selection of the applicants must be based on pre-established criteria in line with the program goals. Departmental interviews with all professional staff participating in the selection will make for a more well-accepted staff of support personnel.

6. Training would include orientation in the role and functions to be assigned, core or on-the-job skill training, and continuing in-service education for all staff involved in the program.

7. Supervision of support personnel may fall to one individual who coordinates the entire program or be on a one-to-one basis of the professional and the aide. The supervisor needs to be aware of the problems and doubts which the support person may encounter as his role develops in the school.

8. Evaluation must be an on-going process of both the personnel's performance and progress, and the program--its stated goals, working elements, and effect upon the school and the professional staff.

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This annotated bibliography, the second in the series of four, pertains to the inservice training of allied professionals and nonprofessionals for community mental health. The period of emphasis is 1960-1967.

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A collection of twelve articles on the use of aides and volunteers in the elementary school.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE PARAPROFESSIONAL, CAREER ADVANCEMENT, AND PUPIL LEARNING. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association; New York: New York University, New Careers Development Center, 1969. (ED 030 933 MF-$0.25 HC-$0.45 7P.)
This conference report, which includes the findings of the Bank Street College of Education survey on the use of paraprofessionals in education, traces the development of paraprofessionals in the classroom from the Depression era until the present time.

Blau, Theordore H. THE PROFESSIONAL IN THE COMMUNITY VIEWS THE NONPROFESSIONAL HELPER: PSYCHOLOGY. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1968. (ED 030 144 MF-$0.25 HC-$0.70 12P.)
This report assumes that professional training programs will not be able to meet future demands for psychological help. The role of the nonprofessional, and the responsibility of the professional psychologist are discussed in terms of this problem

Bowman, Garda W., and Klopf, Gordon J. AUXILIARY SCHOOL PERSONNEL: THEIR ROLES, TRAINING, AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION, BASED ON A NATIONWIDE STUDY OF TEACHER-AIDES, TEACHER-ASSISTANTS, FAMILY WORKERS, AND OTHER AUXILIARY PERSONNEL IN EDUCATION, CONDUCTED FOR THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY. New York: Bank Street College of Education, 1966. (ED 026 713 MF-$0.25 HC-$1.20 22P.)

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Twenty-four members of two poverty areas were chosen to be trained as nonprofessional parent interviewers. They were given the training and then sent to their respective community areas to obtain interviews with the parents of Head Start children.

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Specific processes for utilizing nonprofessional employees in human services are presented. The background, current status, and problems are discussed.

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The Tuba City Elementary School, located in a Bureau of Indian Affairs Sub-agency Headquarters on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona, has conducted a teacher aide program since August 1965. Teacher aides are used in ungraded primary grades, in intermediate grades, and to assist nurses, librarians, and home visitation officers.

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The question is asked about the advisability of engaging naive students in the task of "helping" patients who are unlikely to exhibit identifiable behavior or personality change. Biographical and rating scale data from untrained student therapists are examined, and the conclusion is reached that in most instances the experience has a positive outcome.

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A detailed report by an ACES committee on the use of support personnel with guides for program development.

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